THANKSGIVING SUNDAY

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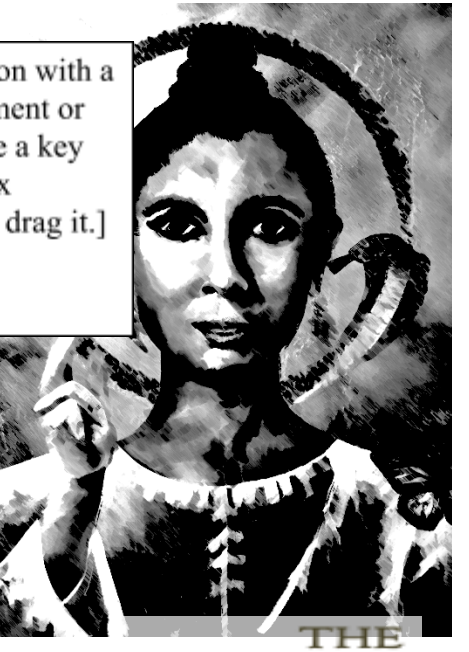


10 AM
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2026
COMMUNITY CHURCH OF DURHAM
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

PRELUDE

Catherine York

*** SOUNDING OF THE BELL**

"Now is the time,"
says Mzwakhe Mbuli,
"to renew the barren soil of nature, ruined
by the winds of tyranny. Now is the time
to commence the litany of hope.
Now is the time!"

As we hear the bell's invitation, we may rise (*)
in body or in spirit to welcome the Spirit of God!

*** INVOCATION**

Ashrei yoshvei
Ashrei yoshvei veitekha
Ashrei yoshvei veitekha
od yehalelukha selah

I sing for you
I sing for what is holy and is true
I sing for all creation, for life and liberation
Everyday anew

From Linke Fligl, a Queer Jewish Chicken Farm and Cultural Project in New York State
Composed for their Sukkot Gathering, 5779 / From Psalm 84:5 (Ashrei Yoshvei)

*** GATHERING THE MANY IN FAITH**
Amy VanCamp, Liturgist

One: Where there is love, where there is joy,
God's delight shines and warms the world.
ALL: **Peace to you, friends of God!**
Rise up in courage,
and shine with God's Spirit!

One: Where there is justice, where there is hope,
God's power is on the move,
and healing is at hand.

ALL: Peace to you, friends of God!
Rise up in courage, and shine with God's Spirit!

One: Where two or three are gathered in solidarity,
Where two or three are gathered in respect,
Where two or three are gathered to rejoice--

ALL: The Risen Christ stirs in our hearts.
The Risen Christ stirs in our church.
The Risen Christ calls us to love, love, love!

One: Amen is the blessing.
Ashe is the power.
Amen and Ashe forever more.

ALL: Amen is the blessing.
Ashe is the power.
Amen and Ashe forever more.

*** HYMN OF THANKSGIVING**

We Gather Together ■ NCH # 421

CALL TO PRAYER AND DISCIPLESHIP

One: Where we have struggled this week, you have been our patience and strength.

ALL: Your love is deeper than the oceans and wider than the skies.

One: Where we have grieved this week, you have been sweet solace and support.

ALL: Your grace is tender and true, and our hope finds a home in you.

One: Where we have missed the mark, you have been our mercy and our peace.

ALL: Your way is forgiving, and your path is our salvation.

In a spirit of stillness, you're invited to pray the prayers of your heart in silence.

One: So it is that we are grateful and bold to pray:

ALL: Earth-maker, Life-giver, Pain-bearer,

Source of all that is and all that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God in whom is heaven:

May the hallowing of your name
ECHO THROUGH THE UNIVERSE!
May your heavenly will be done
by all creatures great and small!
And may your commonwealth
of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth!

With the bread we need this day, feed us.
For the hurt we inflict on one another, forgive us.
By your grace and mercy,
strengthen us through seasons of temptation,
and spare us from trials too great to endure.
Free us from bigotry and evil, for service and truth;
for you reign in *THE GLORY OF THE POWER THAT IS LOVE.*
Amen and Ashe!

Ashe ("a-shay") is a concept found in Yoruban culture (Nigeria/Africa):
an awareness of power, conferred by the Creator God, upon all beings and spirits.

ASHE!

Ashe is the power to make things happen, the power to do good, the power to effect change.
And it is a divine gift! In 2026, our African American friends across the church are using this as a companion to ***Amen***.

Amen acknowledges God's presence and blessing. **Ashe** invokes God's partnership and power!

SUNG RESPONSE "Guide My Feet (while I run this race)"

*** THE GREETING OF PEACE**

*** RESPONSE / "I THANK YOU, JESUS" / NCH #41**

I thank you, Jesus (thank you, Jesus) thank you, Jesus (thank you, Jesus)
Thank you, Jesus, my Savior God,

For you brought me, yes, you brought me
From a mighty, a mighty long way (a mighty long way)
I thank you, Jesus (thank you, Jesus) thank you, Jesus (thank you, Jesus)
Thank you, Jesus, my Savior God,
For you brought me, yes, you brought me
From a mighty, a mighty long way (a mighty long way)

You've been my father (been my father) been my mother (been my mother) 3
Been my sister, my brother too,
For you brought me, yes, you brought me
From a mighty, a mighty long way (a mighty long way)
You've been my father (been my father) been my mother (been my mother)
Been my sister, my brother too,
For you brought me, yes, you brought me
From a mighty, a mighty long way (a mighty long way)

ATTENTIVE TO GOD'S SACRED WORD

COVENANTING WITH A NEW MEMBER

With Antony as he joins the church!

Congregational Welcome and Promise

Friends of God, do you recognize in this friend your brother in Christ? And do you joyfully welcome him into the covenant community in Durham?

We do, by God's grace!

A Covenant in Faith

One: Our commitment is known in covenant.
So let us join the covenant of the church:

ALL: We covenant with one another to seek and respond to the Word and the will of God. It is our purpose to walk together in the ways of the Lord, made known and to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of this Church to witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in all the world, while worshipping God, and striving for truth, justice and peace.

As did our forebears, we depend on the Holy Spirit to lead and empower us. We pray for the coming of the Kingdom of God, and we look with faith toward the triumph of righteousness and eternal life.

One: And let the whole church say AMEN and ASHE!

ALL: Amen and Ashe!

*** BLESSING IN OUR BELOVED COMMUNITY**

Ain't gonna let nobody turn me around
Turn me around, turn me around
Ain't gonna let nobody turn me around
I'm gonna keep on walking,
Keep on talking, marching up to freedom land!

Ain't gonna let injustice turn me around…

DAVE'S PRAYER FOR OUR CHILDREN

With our blessing, children may accompany their friends and teachers to Sunday School!

NOT SCARCITY, BUT ABUNDANCE!

A Commitment to Community and Shared Well-Being

This fall, as is their tradition, our church's ECHO team has made commitments to several community partners, out of the abundance that is created weekly in the thrift shop itself. The year's special recipients, as suggested by the team and affirmed by the Justice & Witness Ministry include:

ECHO thrift shop
with Friends in Action

■ **The Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire**: Promoting awareness and appreciation of African American history and life in order to build more inclusive communities today.

■ **Haven**: Preventing sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking, and supporting and empowering all women, men, non-binary and transgender adults, youth and families, in healing from abuse and rebuilding their lives.

■ **American Civil Liberties Union**: A non-partisan, non-profit organization defending individual rights and constitutional liberties guaranteed by the U.S. constitution and the Bill of Rights.

■ **Immigrant and Refugee Support Group**: Used by the IRSG and Immigrant Visitation Program for commissary fund support, including phone calls, video calls and snacks for immigrants detained at the Strafford County facility.

■ **CCD Immigrant Accompaniment Program**: Extended needed critical support for immigrants in partnership with our own accompaniment program, especially in light of present restrictions on work and movement.

■ **Seacoast Village Project**: Helping elders remain in their own homes, with social events, speakers, classes and shared resources, including shared rides, yard work, moving furniture when needed and more.

A total of $3,500 in support that makes our community more compassionate, more generous and just!

*** OUR BLESSING AND COMMITMENT**

One: We give thanks for the holy inspiration and courage that imagined ECHO almost two decades ago. In its fifteen years, the thrift shop has modeled community kindness, leadership development and an economy of abundance and joy.

ALL: **Praise be to God for ECHO, for the volunteers and staff who bring energy and care to every interaction, and hope and love to every day.**

One: May the gifts we celebrate today weave deep bonds of partnership between us: Friends in Action, the Community Church of Durham, and the many agencies and projects whose work shines light

and warms hearts on the Seacoast.

ALL: **Praise be to God for the many among us**
who guide this partnership on our behalf.
It is their perseverance and service that
makes possible these gifts and the good they will do!

One: For all that we do, and will continue to do, to bring hope and justice to the community we call home:

ALL: **We pray, O God, for your blessing and steadfast love, and for the spirit and strength to move forward in peace together.**
Amen and Ashe!

*** HYMN OF WATCHFULNESS**

Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning ■ Insert

A READING FROM THE ANCIENT TRADITION

Matthew 25:1-13 / **To Keep Lamps Burning** / The Inclusive Bible: First Egalitarian Translation

Then again, the kin-dom of heaven would be likened to ten attendants who took their lamps and went to meet the bridal party. Five of them were wise; five were foolish. When the foolish ones took their lamps, they didn't take any oil with them, but the wise ones took enough oil to keep their lamps burning. The bridal party was delayed, so they all fell asleep.

At midnight there was a cry: "Here comes the bridal party! Let's go out to meet them!" Then all the attendants rose and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, "Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out." But the wise replied, "Perhaps there won't be enough for us; run to the dealers and get some more for yourselves."

While the foolish ones went to buy more oil, the bridal party arrived; and those who were ready went to the marriage feast with them, and the door was shut. When the foolish attendants returned, they pleased to be let in. The doorkeeper replied, "The truth is, I don't know you."

So stay awake, for you don't know the day or the hour.

One: For the Word of God in scripture
ALL: We give thanks!
One: For the Word of God among us
ALL: We give thanks!
One: For the Word of God within us
ALL: We give thanks and praise to God!

MINISTRY OF MUSIC

"Down in the River to Pray" ■ David L. Mennike 7

Our Chancel Choir, David Ervin, Directing

HOMILY
Dave Grishaw-Jones

*** HYMN OF THANKSGIVING**

Now Thank We All Our God ■ NCH # 419

GRATEFUL IN WITNESS, GENEROUS IN LOVE

A WELCOME TO COMMUNITY AND MINISTRY

AN INVITATION TO SHARING AND GENEROSITY

With gladness for God's care and our own commitment to this community's mission, we are moved to offer gifts or follow through on pledges that sustain God's work here in Durham.

*There are **two easy ways to contribute** this morning: using **a QR code** here that takes you quickly to our Giving Page online or **using the plates** as they're passed from pew to pew.*

One: Indeed the sharing of our resources,
the blessing of our gifts in common cause,
is a vital sign of God's grace at work in us:

All: **Let us be brave and wise in collaboration.**
Let us be faithful and generous in service.

One: For vine and the branches are one,
for the Body is sustained in love,
and all that we are and will be together is the Spirit's blessing:

All: **May God's vision be our intention,**
And our intention be our purpose, this day and always.

A MUSICAL REFLECTION ON VISION & PURPOSE
Catherine York

*** SUNG RESPONSE ■ No. 780**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ the Word in flesh born low;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore,
One God, Triune, whom we adore. Amen.

*** OUR COVENANT IN FAITH AND MERCY**

One: Because God's love knows no boundary,
because Christ's joy is unity and peace:
Ours is an Open and Affirming Church,
and all God's children are cherished among us!

ALL: **With our energies we praise You.**
With our hopes we honor You.
With our gifts, we pray Your will be done.

One: Because God's world is holy and good,
because Christ calls us to love all beings and places:
Ours is an Earth-Loving and Earth-Protecting Church,
and all creation is our family, our circle, our home!

ALL: **With our whole hearts we serve You.**
With our whole lives we worship You.
With our gifts, we pray Your will be done.

*** GATHERED UP IN PRAYER AND LOVE**

One: This is [our] prayer.

(As we respond, we might place our hand across our heart…as prayer is embodied in love…)

ALL: Great Spirit of God, Hear our prayer!

Gathered in Song

Come by here, my Lord, come by here…

Gathered in God

For those who are **living with illness** or worry:

For communities **stressed by violence, injustice** and despair:

For those **seeking wisdom** in the midst of a challenge or change:

For those who are faithfully **working for justice** and peace:

Held in Prayer and Silence

*** PRAYER FOR UNITY AND PEACE / UNISON**

One: O Holy God, your peace joins us, one to another, in love.
Your desire is justice and kindness among all living beings.

ALL: Bind up the hearts of the broken spirits among us,
and renew the commitments of your people
to generosity, inclusion, democracy and mercy.

One: Your light shines within us now, within each human heart,
and across the entirety of your magnificent creation.

ALL: Its rays bring salvation, wholeness and grace.
We bear witness to all this with joy!

One: We lift up our many voices in thanksgiving!
And we pray your holy blessing on our many efforts
to bear this light within our homes, villages and public lives.

ALL: All this we pray in the many names of Love.

One: Amen and Ashe!

ALL: Amen and Ashe!

*** HYMN**

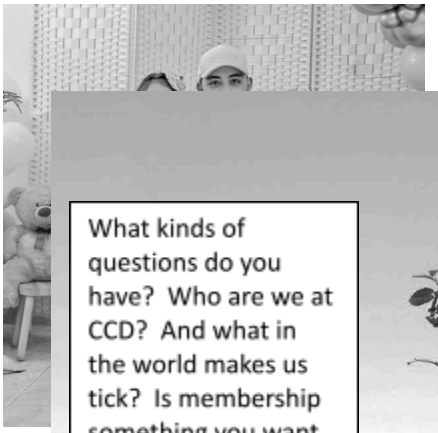
David and Chuck's Hymn ■ NCH # 425

BLESSING & SENDING OUT
Dave Grishaw-Jones

POSTLUDE
Catherine York

A VIDEO GREETING AND PRAYER:

Many will remember last July's visit with Abed Alsalam Manasra and his family here in Durham. Abed is a Palestinian teacher and sheikh, and a brave peacemaker among young adults in the Holy Land and here in the US. Due to US-imposed visa restrictions, Abed is presently



New to the church?

CONNECTIONS & CURIOSITY

What kinds of questions do you have? Who are we at CCD? And what in the world makes us tick? Is membership something you want to consider?

ALL WELCOME!

Two Conversations around Belonging

Sundays, Nov. 15 & 22
1:15 to 2:45 pm
In the Chapel

With Dave GJ and Leaders from the Spiritual Nurture Team



Our Christmas Fair is a joyous multigenerational occasion that brings in the larger community and raises much-needed money for the church – and it requires help from many, many people!!

VOLUNTEERS: Needed on or before Fair day. Sign up online HERE or contact Lorna Ellis (LornaEllisNH@gmail.com or 603-969-7962).

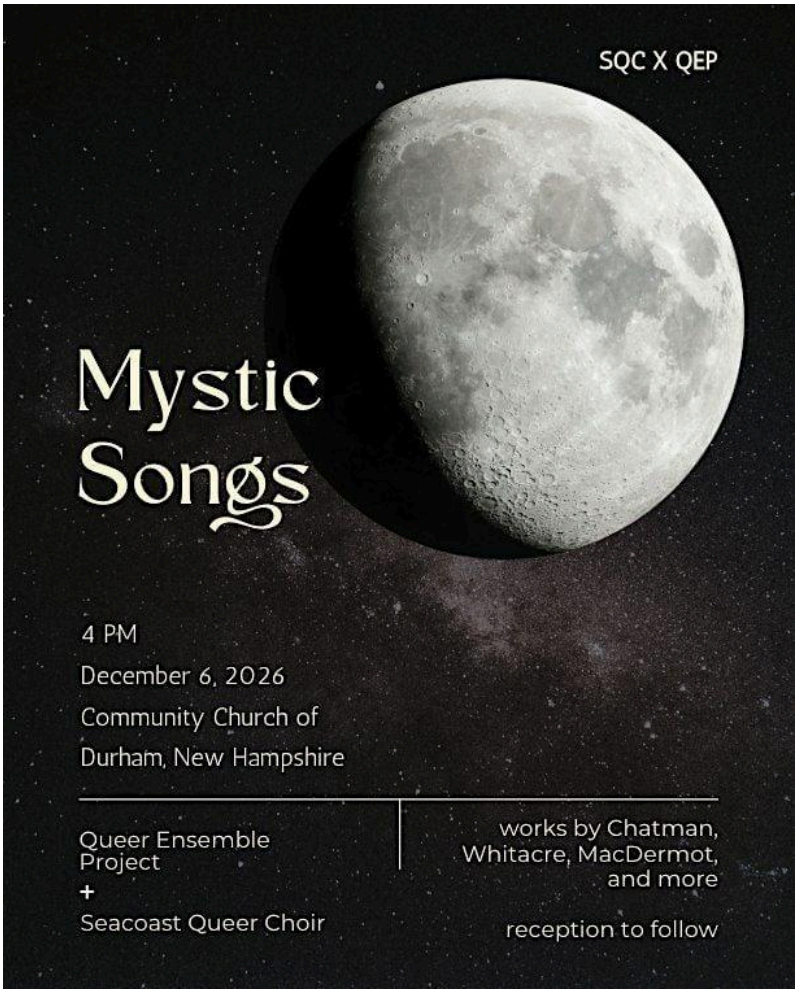
QR for Volunteers

DONATIONS NEEDED: For Jewelry, Crafts, Baked Goods, Soups & Stews, Puzzles, Christmas Decorations! Sign up online HERE or contact Lorna Ellis (LornaEllisNH@gmail.com or 603-969-7962).

QR for Donations

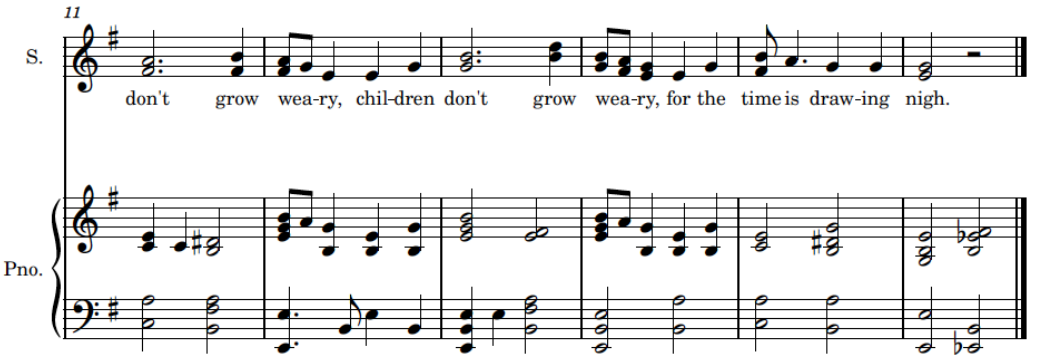
AUCTION ITEMS STILL WELCOME! Please contact Dianne Thompson (dialthomp@comcast.net or 603-785-2927).


GIVING TREE
TAKE A STAR OR STARS
& RETURN UNWRAPPED
GIFT(S) OR GIFT CARD(S)
TO
CHURCH OFFICE
BY DEC 16TH AT
3 P.M.
YOUR DONATIONS BENEFIT:
PASTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND
MY FRIEND'S PLACE
CITY REACH
HAVEN
CROSSROADS HOUSE



A NEW DECEMBER TRADITION!

2



We're expecting a packed house for this special concert… as often is the case for this remarkable Queer Choir!

Tickets are free… but you're encouraged to reserve yours online.

Go to EVENTBRITE and look for MYSTIC SONGS in DURHAM, NH!